

REMARKS

In the Pending Application, the specification has been amended to move the last paragraph of the "Background of the Invention" section to the beginning of the "Summary of the Invention (DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION)" section. In addition, the abstract has been amended to remove the reference numbers. Further, Claim 4 has been objected to and Claims 1-44 have been rejected. Via this Amendment and Response to Office Action, Claims 1-5, 8, 12, 16, 17, 19, 21-23, 26, 29, 31-33, 36 and 40-44 have been amended and Claims 45 and 46 have been added. Therefore, Claims 1-46 are currently pending. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments and support for the amendments is found in the application as filed.

I. Objection to Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Examiner has objected to Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph because there is insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said sliding collar." Claim 4 has been amended to depend from Claim 3 that includes the limitation "further comprising a sliding collar..." It is therefore respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

II. Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4, 12-15, 20-24 and 26-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 4, 12-15, 20-24 and 26-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,010,298 ("Cohn").

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claims is found, either expressly or inherently in a single prior art reference." *MPEP §2131; Verdegall Bros. V. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has failed to set forth a *prima facie* case of anticipation because Cohn does not teach all the limitations of Claims 1, 2, 4, 12-15, 20-24 and 26-39 as amended. With respect to Claims 1, 2, 4, 12-15 and 20, Cohn does not teach a mechanical motor release assembly configured to disconnect and connect the drive pulley from

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said motor. With respect to Claims 21-24 and 26-39, Cohn does not teach disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor using a mechanical motor release assembly.

Claim 1 has been amended to indicate that the motor release assembly of the ramp "is configured to disconnect and connect said drive pulley from said motor." Claim 21 has been amended to replace the phrase "mechanically disengaging and engaging the drive pulley from the motor using a mechanical motor release assembly" with --disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor using a mechanical motor release assembly--. Further, Claims 1, 2, 4, 12, 20-23, 26, 29, 31-33, 36 and 39 have been amended to improve the consistency of the terms used in the claims.

The Cohn patent discloses a ramp assembly that can be mounted in the floor of a vehicle. The ramp assembly includes a reciprocating mechanism that raises the in-floor portion of the ramp assembly to the level of the vehicle's floor. In addition, the Cohn patent discloses a mechanism that permits the ramp to be deployed and retracted in an automatic or a manual mode. When the ramp assembly is in the automatic mode, the ramp is driven by a motor, drive pulley and drive belt configuration. To place the ramp into the manual mode, the tension in the drive belt is released and the drive belt is separated from the drive pulley by a drive belt clutch mechanism. The drive pulley remains connected to the motor. Thus, not only does Cohn fail to teach disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor as recited in Claims 1 and 21, Cohn teaches the exact opposite.

Because Cohn does not teach all the limitations of Claims 1, 2, 4, 12-15, 20-24 and 26-39, it is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

III. Rejection of Claims 3 and 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 3 and 5-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohn in view of 6,602,041 ("Lewis").

To "establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of a claimed invention... all claim limitations must be taught in the prior art." MPEP 2143.

Claims 3, 5 and 8 have been amended to improve the consistency of the terms used in the claims.

Claims 3 and 5-8 depend from Claim 1. Thus, for the reasons set forth in Section II of this Amendment and Response, Cohn does not teach a mechanical motor release assembly configured to disconnect and connect the drive pulley from the motor. Further, this limitation is not taught by Lewis. Therefore, the cited references do not teach all the limitations of Claims 5 and 6-8. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

IV. Rejection of Claims 9-11 and 33-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 9-11 and 33-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohn in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,983,594 ("Holecek").

Claim 33 has been amended to improve the consistency of the terms used in the claims.

Claims 9-11 depend from Claim 1 and Claims 33-35 depend from Claim 21. Thus, for the reasons set forth in Section II of this Amendment and Response, it is respectfully submitted that Cohn does not teach a mechanical motor release assembly configured to disconnect and connect the drive pulley from the motor, and disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor using a mechanical motor release assembly, respectively. Further this limitation is not taught by Holecek. Therefore, the cited references do not teach all the limitations of Claims 9-11 and 33-35. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

V. Rejection of Claims 16-19 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 16-19 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohn in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,257,894 ("Grant").

Claims 16-18 and 40 have been amended to improve the consistency of the wording used in the claims.

Claims 16-19 depend from Claim 1 and Claim 40 depends from Claim 21. Thus, for the reasons set forth in Section II of this Amendment and Response, Cohn does not teach a mechanical motor release assembly configured to disconnect and connect said drive pulley from said motor, and disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor using a

mechanical motor release assembly, respectively. Further this limitation is not taught by Grant. Therefore, the cited references do not teach all the limitations of Claims 16-19 and 40. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

VI. Rejection of Claims 25-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 25-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohn in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,024,580 ("Hunter").

Claims 26, 29 and 31 have been amended to improve the consistency of the terms used in the claims.

Claims 25-31 depend from Claim 21. Thus, for the reasons set forth in Section II of this Amendment and Response, Cohn does not teach disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor using a mechanical motor release assembly. Further this limitation is not taught by Hunter. Therefore, the cited references do not teach all the limitations of Claims 25-31. It is therefore respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

VII. New Claim 45

Claim 45 depends from Claim 1. Thus, for the reasons set forth in Sections II-VI of this Amendment and Response, Cohn does not teach a mechanical motor release assembly configured to disconnect and connect the drive pulley from the motor. Further this limitation is not taught by Lewis, Holecek, Grant or Hunter. Therefore, the references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach all the limitations of Claim 45. It is therefore respectfully asserted that Claim 45 is not anticipated by or obvious over any of the cited references.

VIII. New Claim 46

Claim 46 depends from Claim 21. Thus, for the reasons set forth in Section II-VI of this Amendment and Response, Cohn does not teach disconnecting and connecting the drive pulley from the motor using a mechanical motor release assembly. Further this limitation is not taught by Lewis, Holecek, Grant or Hunter. Therefore, the references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination do not teach all the limitations of Claim 46. It is therefore respectfully asserted that Claim 46 is not anticipated by or obvious over any of the cited references.

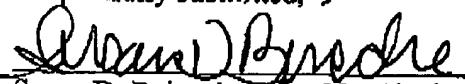
CONCLUSIONS

In view of the remarks set forth in this Amendment and Response to Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that the Pending Application, including Claims 1-46, is in condition for allowance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the foregoing amendments and responses be entered, and the Pending Application be promptly allowed.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if such contact would in any way facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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